

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 12272

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EG, XA
SUBJECT: GOE VIEWS ON AFRICAN DEVELOPMENTS

1. DEPASST SEC FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS-DESIGNATE HARROP, ACCOMPANIED BY DCM AND EMBOFF, PAID CALL JULY 21 ON AMB AHMAD SIDQI, DIRECTOR MFA AFRICAN DEPT. SIDQI, WHO PLAYS IMPORTANT ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT OF GOE AFRICAN POLICY, MADE FOLLOWING POINTS CONCERNING AFRICAN DEVELOPMENTS.

2. HORN OF AFRICA. SIDQI OPINED THAT HARAR AND DIRE DAWA WOULD FALL TO SOMALI-BACKED INSURGENTS OF WESTERN SOMALI LIBERATION FRONT "SOON", AT MINIMUM WITHIN A FEW DAYS, BUT PROBABLY WITHIN FEW WEEKS. GOE HAS HEARD THAT ETHIOPIAN SECOND ARMY IN ASMARA HAS ALREADY PLACED "POLITICAL DEMANDS" BEFORE PMAC AND THUS POLITICAL RELIABILITY OF SECOND ARMY AND CONTINUED DEFENSE OF ASMARA NOW IS CONSIDERABLE DOUBT. WHETHER OR NOT MENGISTU FALLS AS RESULT OF REVERSES IN ERITREA AND OGADEN, ARMY WILL CONSTITUTE ONLY VIABLE POWER IN ETHIOPIA AND DERGUE WILL CONTINUE TO RULE. GOE HOPES THAT MORE MODERAGE DERGUE MEMBERS WILL TAKE CONTROL IN EVENT OF MENGISTU DEMISE, HOWEVER.

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3. SAHARA QUESTION. IN GOE OPINION, SUSAKA EARLY-OCTOBER CONFERENCE TO ADJUDICATE SAHARA QUESTION MASTERFUL PIECE OF TIMING BY MOROCCANS/MAURITANIANS. DURING THIS PERIOD, ARAB HEADS OF STATE WILL BE DEEPLY INVOLVED IN ME PEACE PROCESS AND MANY FONMINS WILL BE ATTENDING UNGA. AS A RESULT, REPS ATTENDING LUSAKA MEETING WILL NOT HAVE AUTHORITY TO MAKE CRUCIAL DECISIONS AND SAHARA QUESTION

WILL BE DEFERRED AGAIN. SIDQI OPINED THAT, REGARDLESS OF LUSAKA CONFERENCE, ALGERIANS BECOMING WEARY OF CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR POLISARIO/SDAR AND NEED SOME FORM OF FACE-SAVING DEVICE TO GET OUT OF IMPASSE. WHEN HARROP COMMENTED THAT IT APPEARED THAT POLISARIO DOING BETTER MILITARILY OF LATE, SIDQI REPLIED THAT FEW RECENT POLISARIO "SUCCESSES" ONLY ISOLATED "PROPAGANDA SPECTACULARS" AND LITTLE REAL PROGRESS BEING MADE BY POLISARIO/SDAR MILITARILY OR DIPLOMATICALLY.

4. GOE CONCEDES THAT MAURITANIA WEAK LINK IN SAHARA QUESTION, BUT RECENT DISPATCH OF MOROCCAN TROUPS TO MAURITANIAN BORDER AREAS SHOULD HELP TO NEGATE POLISARIO GAINS. MALI TERRITORY NOW INCREASINGLY BEING USED AS STAGING AREA FOR RAIDS INTO MAURITANIA AND GOE HAS LEARNED THAT MALI NOT HAPPY WITH ALGERIA OVER THESE VIOLATIONS OF MALI SOVEREIGNTY. GOE BELIEVES THAT BEST FACE-SAVING DEVICE FOR ALGERIA WOULD BE SOME FORM OF CONTROLLED REFERENDUM IN EX-SPANISH SAHARA REGION, WHICH MOROCCANS AND MAURITANIANS COULD ARRANGE TO WIN, BUT WHICH WOULD ALLOW ALGERIANS TO CLAIM THAT SAHARAN PEOPLE'S RIGHTS TO SELF-DETERMINATION HAD BEEN PRESERVED. GOE FINDING THAT HASAN II HARD TO CONVINCE ON THIS SUGGESTION.

5. RADICALS VS. MODERATES. AS REFLECTED IN DELIBERATIONS OF LIBREVILLE OAU SUMMIT, STRENGTH OF HARD-LINE "PROGRESSIVE" CONFIDENTIAL

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AFRICAN LEADERS CURRENTLY IN SHARP DECLINE. AS EXAMPLE, SIQDI CITED LUIS CABRAL OF GUINEA-BISSAU, WHO ATTEMPTING TO MODERATE HIS POSITIONS AND AT PRESENT UNDERTAKING EGYPTIAN-SPONSORED TRIP TO GULF STATES SEEKING FINANCIAL HELP. TANZANIA'S NYERERE ALSO CONSIDERED ANOTHER "PROGRESSIVE" WHO SHIFTING POSITIONS. NYERERE STOPPING IN CAIRO BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER JULY TRIP TO US, BY IMPLICATION TO COORDINATE TANZANIAN AND EGYPTIAN POSITIONS ON AFRICAN QUESTIONS. WHEN DEP ASST SEC HARROP POINTED OUT THAT SEKOU TOURE OF GUINEA ALSO APPEARED TO BE BECOMING MORE MODERATE, BUT WAS HAVING DIFFICULTY CONVINCING OIL-RICH ARAB MODERATES OF CHANGE AND OF STRENGTH OF ISLAM IN GUINEA, SIDQI SUGGESTED THAT LACK OF ARAB SYMPATHY FOR GUINEA PROBABLY DUE TO EXCELLENT RELATIONS THAT SENEGAL'S SENGHOR, TOURE'S RIVAL, MAINTAINS WITH MODERATE ARABS, SAUDIS IN PARTICULAR. GOE, WHILE MAINTAINING "CLOSE" RELATIONS WITH SENGHOR, REALIZES THAT GUINEAN MODERATION MUST BE ENCOURAGED AND, FOR THIS REASON, EGYPT ACCEPTED PAST, UNSUCCESSFUL, ATTEMPT BY TOURE TO MEDIATE BETWEEN EGYPT AND LIBYA. SIDQI REMARKED THAT TREND OF MODERATION IN AFRICAN CIRCLES LIKELY TO CONTINUE, AT LEAST AT SUMMITS, SINCE LOCALE OF OAU SUMMITS SET

tone of deliberations and 1978 summit in Khartoum,
1979 summit in Monrovia.

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6. CHAD INSURGENCY. IN GOE OPINION, SITUATION IN CHAD NOT AS CRITICAL AS EGYPT HAD IMAGINED AT FIRST BLUSH. SIDQI REMARKED LACONICALLY THAT REBELLION HAD BEEN GOING ON FOR OVER TEN YEARS AND FRENCH, WITH WHOM EGYPTIANS HAVE CONSULTED RECENTLY, APPEAR UNCONCERNED ABOUT SPREAD OF REBELLION FROM TIBESTI REGION. GOE HAS DISCOVERED THAT MALLOUM GOVERNMENT WEAK DUE TO DIVISIONS WITHIN CHAD MILITARY AND THIS MAKES MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATIONS WITH NORTHERN DISSIDENTS DIFFICULT. GOE DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT LIBYA CAN BECOME TOO BLATENTLY INVOLVED WITH TIBESTI INSURGENCY WITHOUT DANGEROUSLY AFFECTING LIBYA'S RELATIONS WITH NIGER AND ALGERIA, WITH WHOM LIBYA ALSO HAS TERRITORIAL DISPUTES. GOE RAISED ALARM CONCERNING LIBYAN INVOLVEMENT IN AOZOU PRIMARILY TO EMBARRASS QADHAFI, IN AN EFFORT TO CREATE IMAGE OF DANGEROUS LIBYAN "IMPERIALISM" SPREADING THROUGH CENTRAL AFRICA AND TO WEAKEN LIBYAN TIES TO AREA STATES.

7. ZAIRE-ANGOLA. WHEN DEPASTSEC HARROP ASKED ABOUT REPORTS THAT NEW BATCH OF EX-KATANGESE GENDARMES BEING READIED FOR INVASION OF SHABA PROVINCE, SIDQI OPINED THAT SHABA WOULD CONTINUE TO BE PLAGUED BY SPORADIC GUERRILLA VIOLENCE, WHICH IMPOSSIBLE TO ERADICATE COMPLETELY, UNTIL MOBUTU BEGINS TO MOVE ON PROPOSED ECONOMIC AND ADMINIS-
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TRATIVE REFORMS, WHICH WILL ELIMINATE CAUSES OF DIS-SATISFACTION IN ZAIRE. ZAIRE MORE VULNERABLE TO ITS OWN CORRUPTION THAN TO SPORADIC VIOLENCE ACROSS ANGOLAN BORDER. SIDQI REMARKED THAT ANGOLA AT PRESENT PREOCCUPIED BY ITS OWN INTERNAL STRUGGLES AND CAN PAY LITTLE ATTENTION TO ZAIRE. RECENT ABORTIVE COUP IN LUANDA NOT BASICALLY IDEOLOGICAL, AS REPORTED BY PRESS, BUT IN REALITY BE-GINNING OF CONFRONTATION BETWEEN ANGOLA'S MULATTO AND BLACK POPULATIONS. SIDQI PREDICTED THAT THIS MULATTO-BLACK RIVALRY WILL TAKE YEARS TO RESOLVE. MULATTOES, BETTER EDUCATED UNDER PORTUGUESE RULE, GENERALLY MORE RADICAL AND THEIR RANKS HAVE BEEN STRENGTHENED BY ARRIVAL OF PORTUGUESE RADICALS AFTER FALL OF GONSALVES IN LISBON. SIDQI REMARKED THAT HE PERSONALLY KNEW AUGOSTINHO NETO AND CONSIDERED NETO TO BE RELATIVE MODERATE WHO CURRENTLY ATTEMPTING APPEASE MORE RADICAL ELEMENTS OF MPLA LEADERSHIP. NETO'S MODERATE TENDENCIES SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED.

8. SOUTHERN AFRICA. SIDQI EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR RECENT US EFFORTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA ("YOU HAVE COME LATE INTO GAME") AND NOTED THAT US EFFORTS TO SOLVE RHODESIA QUESTION URGENTLY NEEDED. GOE MOST DISTURBED BY RECENT RHODESIAN EFFORTS TO ATTACK MOZAMBIQUE. AIM OF SMITH GOVERNMENT, SIDQI ASSERTED, WAS TO DRIVE MACHEL GOVERNMENT DEEPER INTO ARMS OF SOVIETS SO THAT RHODESIA COULD THEN CLAIM SOVIET MENACE THREATENING SOUTHERN AFRICA. USG SHOULD REALIZE THAT RHODESIAN INTRANSIGENCE IS WHAT WILL DRIVE "CONFRONTATION STATES" INTO ARMS OF SOVIETS. MODERATE CAUSE IN AFRICA, FOR WHICH EGYPT WORKING, WOULD BE GREATLY ASSISTED BY US HELP IN ENDING RHODESIAN IMPASSE.

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9. COMMENT: SIDQI IS ONE OF GOE'S LEADING AFRICAN EXPERTS AND ATTENDED LIBREVILLE OAU SUMMIT TO ADVISE EGYPTIAN DELEGATION. HIS COMMENTS ON DANGER IN CHAD AND RESURGENCE OF MODERATE FORCES IN AFRICA ARE AT SOME VARIANCE WITH HIS SUPERIORS.

10. DEPARTMENT PASS TO OTHER POSTS AS DEEMED APPROPRIATE.
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